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Plumbing Contractor Pleads Guilty to Stealing Sales Tax, Operating Business After License Revoked

Tacoma, Wash., May 28, 2009 — A Tacoma plumbing contractor plead guilty today to stealing sales tax he collected from customers and continuing to operate a business after his license was revoked.

Pierce County Superior Court Judge Susan K. Serko sentenced James. O. Beni Jr to one year in jail on each count but suspended the sentence after Beni paid more than \$23,000 in restitution, penalties, and court costs.

Beni was charged in March after continuing to operate Pacific Plumbing and Heating, Inc., 5039 S. Washington St., despite repeated warnings by the Department of Revenue that such post-revocation activity was illegal.

Beni was accused of collecting and keeping at least \$16,319 in state and local sales tax from customers after the Department closed his business in 2006 for nonpayment of taxes.

The charges were filed by the Criminal Justice Division of the Washington State Attorney General's Office, at the request of the Department of Revenue.

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